

THE BRAILLE MONITOR

INKPRINT EDITION

VOICE OF THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND



The National Federation of the Blind is not an organization speaking for the blind--it is the blind speaking for themselves

N. F. B. Headquarters
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THE BRAILLE MONITOR

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BRaille MONITOR
(June, 1960)

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NFB MIAMI CONVENTION -- PRELIMINARY BULLETIN

The National Federation of the Blind convention and twentieth anniversary celebration will be held at the New Everglades Hotel in Miami, Florida, July 1 - 4. If you have not done so already, please make your reservations direct with the hotel, sending a carbon of your letter to Mr. A. H. Drake, Duval Hotel, Tallahassee, Florida. Make your reservations soon or you may not be able to get them.

Convention arrangements as to times of meeting and other matters will be somewhat different this year.

The first business session will open at 8:30 A.M., Friday, July 1. The Saturday and Sunday sessions will also begin at 8:30 A.M. The Monday session will begin at 8:00 A.M. The convention will close sharply at 5:00 P.M. on Monday.

There will be a dance Friday evening and a tour Saturday afternoon. The banquet will be Saturday night.

The Saturday and Sunday sessions will be devoted entirely to regular program items. Tentatively these will include:

1. Functions of the sheltered workshops -- paper and panel discussion.
2. Sheltered shop workers: Collective bargaining and minimum wage guarantees -- paper and panel discussion.
3. A proposal for a comprehensive rehabilitation program -- paper and panel discussion.
4. Disability insurance -- recent developments.
5. Unemployment compensation -- recent developments.
6. A talk by the president of the American Association of Instructors for the Blind.
7. A talk on the current developments in vocational rehabilitation, by Louis Rives, Jr., Chief, Division of Services to the Blind, Office of Vocational Rehabilitation.
8. Elliott Committee study and hearings.
9. NFB legislative report.

The Friday morning agenda includes: Opening ceremonies; report on convention arrangements; roll call; appointment of nominating committee; and one or two regular program items.

Friday afternoon will be turned over to the president's report and the report of the Committee on Budget and Finance.

Monday morning from 8 to 12 will be given over to the report of

the Constitutional Amendments Committee.

On Monday afternoon there will be reports from: The Endowment Fund Committee, the Employability Committee, the White Cane Week Committee, our fundraiser, elections and the selection of the 1962 convention city. So far we have received tentative or firm invitations from Buffalo, Philadelphia, Detroit, and Fort Worth.

The Constitutional Committee will meet at the New Everglades Hotel at 9:00 A.M., Wednesday, June 29. All proposed constitutional amendments should be sent to Russell Kletzing, chairman of the committee. His address is 2341 Cortez Lane, Sacramento 25, California. Endorsements by five states are necessary to meet a constitutional requirement. However, the endorsements can be provided at the time of the convention. So please get your proposal for constitutional amendments to the committee as soon as possible.

The Resolutions Committee will meet at 9:00 A.M. on Thursday, June 30. The chairman of the Resolutions Committee is Ray Dinsmore. His address is 131 East 19th Street, Indianapolis, Indiana. Please get your proposed resolutions to him in advance of the convention if possible.

The Executive Committee will meet at 1:30 P.M. on Thursday, June 30.

NOTICE TO STATE PRESIDENTS
by Alma Murphey, St. Louis, Missouri

Attention all State Presidents: The third annual meeting of state presidents will be held June 30, at 8:00 P.M. The room will be announced. Presidents elected since Santa Fe may not know that this meeting has no official connection with the National Federation. It affords an opportunity for presidents to discuss their particular state problems with the group most able to make constructive suggestions. So attend the meeting, help and be helped.

ITEMS OF INTEREST FROM THE WORLD COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

"... There are more than 500 different types of work open to the blind in the USSR. Blind people, whether employed or not, receive government pensions and are entitled to special privileges. They have a 6-hour working day and an annual paid holiday of 24 working days.

They are exempted from payment of income tax and taxes on radio, and travel free on local urban transport. Education for blind children is free and compulsory. There are 70 state schools for the blind and visually handicapped. Among subjects are Braille reading and writing, music, radio engineering, carpentry, electrical engineering, cardboard-box making, needlework and cookery. About 500 blind students are now in universities for the sighted. After completing their studies, they are guaranteed employment in their special field. They are employed as teachers, lawyers, scientists, and managers of factories or offices. There are also correspondence schools for the blind who have entered industry. There are a number of recreational centers, libraries, clubs, etc. Professor Sokolyansky and his colleagues have developed three new machines, based on electronics. The most interesting is a reading machine which enables blind persons to read ordinary printed books and newspapers. Another, known as a 'tactileceptor,' is based on touch and teaches speech; the 'teletactor' is a telephone adapted for use by the deaf-blind.

"... Following a request from the government of Portugal, it is expected that the International Labor Organization will make available in 1960 the services of a vocational expert in the field of the welfare of the blind. At the request of the Syrian government, the services of the United Nations expert in home teaching for the blind, Mr. Walter Wagner, have been extended to November, 1960. It is expected that the American Foundation for Overseas Blind may provide the additional equipment needed for the School for the Blind in Damascus. The United Nations Technical Assistance Operations is considering the feasibility of providing a new Braille printing press for the Cairo (UAR) training center for the blind some time in 1960. In Eastern Germany there are 7 residential centers for the blind and 7 homes. There is a Braille printing house in Leipzig, which publishes weekly and monthly papers. The Ministry of Education of the government of India has set up a model School for Gifted Blind Children at Dehra Dun. Schools for the blind and deaf have recently been established in Jamaica.

"... Special equipment for physics and chemistry laboratories, which will enable students at the Jerusalem Education Home for the Blind to undergo scientific training and obtain employment in fields which until now have been closed to them, is to be manufactured in Israel... The RNIB has now decided on a gradual transfer to Solid Dot Braille for all its magazines. Solid Dot Braille has two main advantages -- the dots are uncrushable and much thinner paper may be used, thus cutting down volume by half... The Louis Braille Memorial Museum Committee wishes to repeat its thanks for the world-wide support it is receiving. From April 1 to October 1, the museum will be open 10 - 12 A.M., and 2 - 6 P.M., every day except Tuesday."

(From Newsletter of the World Council for the Welfare of the Blind, current issue.)

UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFIT ELIGIBILITY FOR THE BLIND

From The Labor Market and Employment Security, January, 1960
(U.S. Dept. of Labor)

"Hire the Handicapped -- It's Good Business" is a slogan which the public employment service has heartily endorsed. The Employment Service has long recognized the need for special effort on behalf of the handicapped to overcome the disadvantages which block their path to competitive employment. Counseling, selective placement, assistance in vocational rehabilitation, and special promotional activities have characterized the Employment Service program for the physically handicapped.

What of unemployment insurance? Has it lent support to this unremitting drive on behalf of the handicapped? The unemployment insurance laws all require that, to be eligible, claimants must be "able to work." How is this applied to the handicapped? Most of the laws either have specific provisions or interpretations requiring that claimants make an active search for work. How does this apply in the case of the handicapped?

The classic unemployment insurance definition of ability to work emphasizes two factors: the individual's physical and mental capacity to do recognized forms of work, and his ability to do it under conditions in which persons performing similar services ordinarily work. This definition leans heavily on the truism that ability to work, like availability for work, depends upon the work which the individual is able to do or available to do, not on the availability of work for him.

While it is easy to recite the general statements that have been made in unemployment insurance decisions that are applicable in testing the eligibility of handicapped workers for benefits, establishing exactly how they have been applied is difficult, if not impossible. That there remains ample room for differences of opinion is well exemplified by two decisions, one a court decision from Pennsylvania, one [an appeals examiner decision from Wyoming].

The Pennsylvania case was decided by the Superior Court for the Philadelphia District (McDaniel v. Unemployment Compensation Board of Review and Crown Paper Board Company, 151 A (2d) 667 June 10, 1959). The claimant had worked for Crown Paper Board Co. as a fire-

man and stationary engineer for 8 years. On January 15, 1956 he had to discontinue his work because of failing eyesight. He continued various treatments after he left his job and finally his eyesight failed to the point where he reached a state of total blindness which was complicated by other diseases. On November 19, 1956, he was hospitalized at an eye hospital where a diagnosis was made that he was totally incapacitated and that he would never again be able to work. He filed his claim for benefits on November 7, 1956. He had contacted an employment counselor for the Pennsylvania Association for the Blind by telephone on July 7, 1956 although he did not report personally to explore the possibility of being placed in a job. In May 1957 he underwent a test to determine his ability to make and assemble cardboard posts used in transporting heavy batteries. As a result of this test, it was determined that he had the ability to learn and the manual dexterity to perform assembly work. The Board of Review had denied benefits to the claimant on the ground that he was not able to work, saying that: "Claimant, during the period in question, had not completely become rehabilitated and possibilities of securing available work could not be explored."

In its opinion, the Superior Court cited the testimony of the employment counselor for the Pennsylvania Association for the Blind to the effect that a person who goes blind gradually does not necessarily need rehabilitation in order to perform a job. He had testified that he had treated the claimant's disability on a "job-training setting" and that he had done well and "without the shadow of doubt" there were other jobs he could do without further rehabilitation. The claimant himself had testified: "... if you actually want to know my ability, you would have to ask a blind man. He can tell you more than a sighted man. When you see a man you see him blinded. You say that man is in darkness, but he is not in darkness. He just don't see. A man's mind sees, not his eyes. His eyes are only a window just to peer through. Me, I have to feel. So I see with my hands."

Despite the testimony of the Blind Association representative and the claimant, the court pointed to the testimony of the Pennsylvania Bureau's employment counselor to the effect that available jobs which the claimant could perform would be "very rare" and that he did not send a claimant to any job unless he had first told the employer about it, had communicated with the State Council for the Blind placement agent to determine the claimant's physical capacity, and had made a job analysis to determine whether the man could work. The court also cited the claimant's application for workmen's compensation alleging total blindness and his own statements that he was totally incapacitated. As a result, the Superior Court affirmed the Board's denial of benefits to the claimant....

By contrast is this decision by the Wyoming Appeals Examiner

in the case of a blind claimant who was attending a training school (1126-AT-59, October 8, 1959, to be published in BSSUI, AA-235.2-7, Report 117, February 1960). The deputy's re-determination had denied benefits to claimant effective July 1, 1959, when he began a training course as piano tuner and repairman on an exploratory basis on the recommendation of the State Vocational Rehabilitation Service's counselor for the blind. The claimant had lost his job as a warehouse-manager in a reduction in force.

The Vocational Rehabilitation counselor for the blind had submitted a statement of his activities in trying to find work for the claimant, certifying that the claimant had agreed to drop his training if a reasonably suitable job could be found for him.

The Wyoming Appeals Examiner stated:

"The search for work and availability for work of a seriously handicapped individual must be considered in a different light than that of the average unemployed person. The Counselor has stated appropriately in his sworn statement, '... it takes much specialized background and experience to offset the employers' resistance to hiring a legally blind applicant, and this experience and background the blind applicant does not have. The Federal Government years ago recognized and accepted this fact and that is why Vocational Rehabilitation has been delegated this authority.' A blind person acting in his own behalf would have great difficulty in searching for employment by the usual method of employer contacts. It is necessary that a qualified representative of a service such as Vocational Rehabilitation assist such a claimant. It is considered that with this specialized type of assistance on a continuing basis the requirement of 'actively seeking work' is met for the claimant by such specialized and authorized representative. In this case the Counselor is making a determined and continuing effort to develop employment for the claimant and claimant by his agreement with Vocational Rehabilitation is available for work in that he is not only willing but required by his agreement to quit training school immediately if suitable employment is located for him. Under these circumstances it is considered that claimant has been available for work and actively seeking work during the time he has been attending the training school for the blind...."

BRAILLE CREDIT UNION MATERIAL SOON AVAILABLE
by Paul Kirton

The Credit Union National Association and the CUNA Mutual Insurance Company have jointly arranged for the publication of Credit

Union material in Braille. They have ordered 10,000 copies from the National Braille Press. The contents of the pamphlets were worked out in conjunction with our Madison office after the special needs of the credit unions of the blind were learned from our various affiliate credit unions. The pamphlets are primarily designed to explain to prospective and new members the workings of a credit union, but they also contain items of interest to old-timers as well. In each pamphlet appears an easy-to-use table from which one can determine the monthly payment due on any loan. The table is for 60 months and loans up to \$900.00 but one may calculate even larger loans by adding the results of two smaller loans. Before one applies for a loan, he can decide how much he will need; then, by scanning down the "Money Payment Schedule," he can find the amount of payment that will best fit his budget. By consulting the "Number of Months" column beside this "Monthly Payment Schedule" it is quite easy to determine how many months will be needed to pay back the desired loan. This table will be of permanent use to every member of the credit union.

The pamphlets will be distributed through the State Credit Union Leagues. If the officers of each affiliate interested in credit union pamphlets will write to the Madison office, we will give you the address of the distribution point in your state. The pamphlets will be provided without charge and should be available by the time this issue reaches you.

IMPORTANT NEW BRAILLE SWITCHBOARD DEVELOPMENT

by Charles C. Brown
Director, Vocational Rehabilitation
Oregon Commission for the Blind, Portland

A Braille attachment, quite new in type, which will enable a blind person to operate any ordinary switchboard, has been developed by engineers of Pacific Telephone and Telegraph in Portland, Oregon.

These engineers were familiar with various other devices which have been developed to enable blind persons to operate switchboards but they immediately recognized certain disadvantages. The new attachment eliminates the necessity of the operator's passing her ringed finger over the switchboard until she locates the lamp which has lighted. The new attachment is affixed to the left side of any ordinary switchboard. On this little attachment is a small metal strip in which there are holes, one group of two holes and two groups of four holes. When a call comes in to the switchboard, pins come up through the various holes in the form of Braille numbers. If, for example, an outside call comes in to the

switchboard, a pin in the top hole of the group of two holes comes up, thus identifying the incoming call as a trunk call. In one of the other two groups of four holes the appropriate number of pins pop up immediately identifying the number of the trunk on which the call is coming in. The blind operator is thereby enabled to locate the appropriate jacks immediately by reading the Braille on the attachment at the left of her switchboard and she can then pick up the appropriate cords and attend to the call.

When a call is completed a Braille number appears, showing the number of the cord pair to be disconnected. If the call originates from a station within the building where the switchboard is located, the bottom pin in the group of two holes appears, thus identifying the call as a station call. The appropriate number of the extension making the call also appears on the Braille attachment so that the operator can attend to this call immediately. This new device, also, will enable the blind switchboard operator to attend immediately to extension operators within the building who may flash the operator for various purposes. If a station user wishes to attract the attention of the operator, he merely flashes the operator by pushing the button on the telephone up and down in the usual manner. The operator can tell from the Braille attachment immediately that a station user is flashing her, just as if she were receiving a station call; however, if a station user wishes to flash the operator for a transfer of an outside call, he flashes the operator in the usual manner but both pins in the group of two holes pop up, thus indicating to the operator that a call is to be transferred from one extension to another. The Braille also appears so that she can identify the station which is flashing for the purpose of having the call transferred. The jacks and cord pairs on the switchboard are also numbered in Braille, enabling the blind switchboard operator to find her jacks and to identify cord pairs immediately. One extremely valuable feature of this new Braille attachment is that it also shows priority of calls, so that the operator will know which signal should be given first attention.

The Oregon State Commission for the Blind has installed the first such switchboard in this country, having this new Braille attachment. We are now training a blind switchboard operator to operate this board, and it is hoped that within a short time we will be able to induce other employers who have switchboards to adopt this Braille attachment and to employ blind switchboard operators. Owing to the fact that federal, state, county and municipal civil service commissions often have stringent requirements in the form of previous PBX experience before an individual can qualify for the civil service examination for PBX operator, the Oregon State Commission for the Blind plans to employ a PBX operator-trainee, on a temporary basis, to enable a blind person to obtain the necessary paid experience so that she can qualify for civil service examinations.

This attachment is adaptable for either the 551-555 or 556 switchboards. It is also worthy of note that it can be constructed from materials which any telephone company has on hand. It is not necessary to design special equipment for this attachment. Your local telephone company can obtain additional information regarding this new Braille attachment by writing to me at 535 S.E. 12th Avenue, Portland 14, Oregon.

A LEAF FROM MOSCOW'S BOOK

From the Minnesota Bulletin:

"It is an established fact that in Russia the direction of all education is in the hands of the State. The government decides who shall receive maximum training, who limited, and who none at all. The parents have no choice in the matter. That could not happen here, you say? Yet it has, in our own Minnesota. By interpretative gymnastics Services to the Blind has come up with pseudo-authority to decide where blind children shall attend school. It has even ordered parents not to visit the residential school until the proper authorities have acted. The day-school program is being forced upon these parents, regardless of their wishes.

"This is certainly a flagrant violation of parental rights. If one bureaucratic agency can assume control of one group of children, what is to prevent other bureaucratic agencies from doing the same thing to other groups of children? An arbitrary system is being placed ahead of the blind child's welfare. Shall we allow the bureaucrats to deprive parents of the right to make use of the facilities already provided by the taxpayers of this state? Shall we permit a public servant to become a public master? If this were taking place in Russia, we should have to answer 'yes,' but this is not Russia. We do not have to sit idly by while others filch from us our sacred rights. Let us rise and oppose this usurpation of power. Let us tell our neighbors about it, each in his own circle. Let us work together; by circulating information; by fostering legislation, or by whatever legitimate means we may, to safeguard the rights of the parents and children of our state, and to eradicate from the record this baleful leaf from the Book of Moscow."

SHELTERED SHOPS -- MANAGEMENT COSTS SOAR: BLIND WORKERS PAY

From the California Council Bulletin: "On January 14, 1960, the Los Angeles Workshop for the Blind reached its 30th anniversary. . . . In

November, 1958, there were 159 employees in the Los Angeles Center but by November, 1959, there were only 76. Since 1953 there has been a growing managerial pyramid, which has not been accompanied by a rise in production. First, provision was made for a General Manager, which would make, it was claimed, for greater efficiency and greater employment. Next a General Sales Manager. This followed by a Production Engineer. In 1959, two Supervisors of Quality Control were appointed, which, it is understood, is a Federal requirement. All this, of course, augmented by secretarial, travel expenses and other costs incident to the positions. Added to this, thirty civil service employees in the Los Angeles Center alone. And yet today's production is at its lowest ebb in years....

"The three-fold markup on products sold to the public is pricing CIB out of the market. A silver ironing board cover goes to the sales agency at \$1.55 but to the public at \$4.65; a No. 5 18-inch brush, a standard item, goes from \$3.10 to \$9.00; brown-banded dust mops from \$1.35 to \$3.90....

"The blind and other handicapped workers in the CIB centers and public-spirited citizens want to see improvement in goods and production along with efficiency and streamlining of management. Reductions in overhead are indicated to make products reasonably competitive on the market. The workers are determined to contact the groups and individuals who can and will take steps and measures looking to the accomplishment of these ends."

HOUCK FOUNDATION DIRECTOR FINDS LITTLE INTEREST AMONG BLIND IN TELEPHONE ANSWERING SERVICE

(The following is an excerpt from a letter written by Frank W. Moffett, director of the May K. Houck Foundation, Sarasota, Florida, in response to an inquiry from a visually handicapped woman in Illinois.)

"... Since our information sheet was issued, we have begun training couples, one of whom is blind, to become motel managers, and in addition the local owner of a telephone answering service has been cooperating with us in exploring ways and means of getting blind or other handicapped people interested in conducting telephone answering services. Such an opportunity occurred in this area and we sought to find a blind couple to develop the opportunity, but we found no one who was interested.... Following this, I wrote to the editor of the Braille Monitor, my purpose being to seek to find out whether there was an interest by blind people in answering services, and if so, to what extent did the interest go. Thus far, your letter is the only one

received showing any interest. I hoped that the publication of my letter might at least stimulate discussion in the pages of the Monitor and that this might lead eventually to the arousing of active interest on the part of some of the large agencies. Inasmuch as your letter is the only one of which I have knowledge, the evidence thus far would seem to indicate that there is little interest on the part of blind people in such work. . . ." Frank W. Moffett, 1896 Bahia Vista Avenue, Sarasota, Florida.

(Editor's note: The Monitor editor knows of a fair number of telephone answering services now in actual operation by blind people. Several of them have been described in these pages. In view of this publicity, and of the opportunity offered by the Houck Foundation program, it is indeed somewhat surprising that there has not been as yet a greater response.)

CLEVELAND BROOMMAKERS STRIKE

From The Cleveland Press, April 11: "Eight broommakers continued their strike today for higher wages against the Society for the Blind. They ignored a warning that they would be replaced if they did not return to work. Cleo Dolan, the Society's executive director, said that replacements would be trained for the jobs held by the six winders and two stitchers on strike for a 10% wage increase. 'We would like to give them more money, but we have to keep our costs down to meet competition,' Dolan said. . . . 'We received our last increase in 1956,' said Charles Testa, 60, spokesman for the strikers. He added, 'Since then living costs have gone up.' "

And a few days later: "Striking broommakers at the Cleveland Society for the Blind have agreed to end their 10-day strike. The vote came after the Society proposed changes in production methods which should result in increasing production. This will permit the broom-makers to earn more under piecework rates, Dolan said."

Glenn Hoffman writes: "This is the first time that employees of the Cleveland Society have made a courageous effort to obtain a small degree of justice. . . . The difficulty confronting these men has been that they are all totally blind and not able to compete with the organization against them, since they are unable to post themselves on facts and figures contained in the Society's financial report. They are outnumbered two to one by professional workers who have ganged up on them. The newspaper account implies that the strike was settled by the agency. This is because the news item was given to the paper by the agency. The fact is that the strike was settled only through the

help of Mr. Sam Sponseller, who was the union representative at the NFB's Cleveland convention in 1943. He has been an international union business agent and an honorary member of our Cleveland chapter for many years. Those who were on strike want to express their sincere appreciation for his efforts...."

NEW ST. JOSEPH BLIND CENTER DEDICATED

From the St. Joseph (Missouri) Gazette: "The new recreation center of the Pony Express Association of the Blind was dedicated in ceremonies last night. Members of the Missouri Federation of the Blind chapters in Kansas City and St. Louis, along with many sighted residents of this area, were on hand.... Participating in the ceremonies were Mrs. Alma Murphey, St. Louis, president of the Missouri Federation of the Blind; Mayor Arthur J. Meers; Herbert Gettys, representing the Allied Workers, a Kansas City chapter of the blind Federation, and John B. Comello, president of the Northwest Missouri Association for the Blind. Olen Shain, Pony Express president, gave the address of welcome, and Weldon Dillener, Lions Club district governor, was M. C. The center had received scores of useful gifts from individuals and groups. In addition to providing recreation facilities for the blind, the center will be used as a display area and sales outlet for products made by the blind here. The permanent meeting place was secured by the Lions Clubs of St. Joseph and Northwest Missouri. There are 32 members of the Pony Express Association."

OREGON SEMINAR by Lydia Harris

The Oregon Council of the Blind held a spring seminar in Portland, March 26, at the Washington Hotel. It was one of the best, and also the best attended seminar, we have ever held. Mrs. Marie Webb was chairman of the seminar committee and did an outstanding job. The first item on the program was a panel on "Education of the Blind." Participating were Nicholas Granet, lawyer, school board member, also a member of the Oregon Commission for the Blind; Dr. D. V. Bain, assistant superintendent of schools, and Ronald Warner of Medford. It was emphasized that, although the Oregon legislature passed a bill prohibiting discrimination against blind teachers, the battle is not won. Now starts the real battle to get qualified blind teachers placed. It is a job of educating the school boards and the general public to accept blind teachers. Legislation, with Stanhope Pier as chair-

man, was the next item. All members were urged to get behind our legislative committee and really push to get our aid to the blind bills passed. A history of work for the blind was given by Mrs. Elizabeth Cutsforth. If there were any doubts about our having made gains, she dispelled them. At the banquet that evening Secretary of State Howell Appling was the main speaker. And so closed an interesting, informative and educational day.

A newly-adopted law affecting incorporation made it necessary for us to revise our own articles of incorporation. At a meeting of our executive board the day after the seminar, Mr. George Howeler was selected as our registered agent.

SOUTH CAROLINA CONVENTION

by Donald Capps

The city of Greenville was the site of the fourth annual convention of the South Carolina Aurora Club of the Blind, April 30 - May 1. Seven distinguished speakers enriched our first session. The highlight of the convention was the Saturday evening banquet, at which there were special presentations. Among these was the organization's annual service award which was presented to Mr. Sol Kohn, Jr., in recognition of his employing Miss Lois Boltin as the state's first Braille switchboard operator.... Six beautiful Braille electric clocks, contributions to the convention by Mr. Hubert E. Smith, president of Ways and Means for the Blind, Augusta, Georgia, were presented to various members of the organization. John N. Taylor ... was the principal banquet speaker and delivered an eloquent and meaningful address.... The Sunday morning session included an address by Dr. Samuel M. Lawton, founder of the Aurora Club. Dr. Lawton was followed by chapter presidents who gave progress reports of their respective chapters.... President Donald C. Capps addressed the Sunday afternoon session, outlining in some detail the accomplishments of the SCACB during its 4-year existence. Following this, he and his wife, Betty, were presented with a beautiful pair of triple candelabra by International Sterling, contributed by members of the four chapters of the organization as well as by members-at-large and Ways and Means for the Blind, in recognition of the services they have rendered during the past four years. It came as a complete surprise to the recipients.... Because of constitutional restrictions, there were wholesale changes on the board of directors and executive committee, including the presidency. The new officers are: President, Marshall Tucker, 96 Oak Dale Court, Spartanburg; first vice president, Donald C. Capps, Columbia; second vice president, John L. Cooley, Spartanburg; secretary, Archie Nunnery, Columbia;

treasurer, John C. Potter, Columbia. Members of the new board: Mrs. Katherine Morrison, Mrs. Lucy Moore, Charles Carmichael, Claude Grainger and W.F. Young, Columbia; Marvin Derrick, Mrs. Ivey Cooley and David James, Spartanburg; Mrs. Mildren Kirkland and Mrs. Elizabeth Porter, Charleston; W. Harry Patterson, Greenville. President Tucker and John L. Cooley were elected as official delegate and alternate respectively to the Miami convention.

VIRGINIA CONVENTION

by John Nagle

The second annual convention of the Virginia Federation of the Blind was held in Roanoke, May 6-8. The high point of the program was a panel on "Employment Opportunities for the Blind." Four members of the organization discussed their particular business or profession. The panelists were: Gordon Overstreet, owner and operator of a general store; Lucy Mennes, piano teacher; Clinton Bonnett, masseur, and James Nelson, medical secretary. Other program features were talks by Dr. D. C. MacFarland, executive secretary of the Virginia Commission for the Visually Handicapped; Mr. B. V. Hollomon, district manager of the Roanoke Social Security Office, and Dr. T. Munford Boyd, member of the NFB's board of directors and professor of law at the University of Virginia. John F. Nagle reported on Federal legislation. J.A. Garnett reported that the VFB-sponsored bill to repeal Virginia's lien law passed the Assembly unanimously but was lost in the Senate, a casualty of the last-minute scramble.

The convention banquet was well attended by members and friends of the VFB who were stirred by the fine address delivered by John N. Taylor. Mr. Taylor narrated the history of the organization and then presented charters to the four chapter presidents -- Mrs. Dorothea Foulkrod, Richmond; Bernard Cadd, Roanoke; Robert W. McDonald, Potomac Federation, and Mrs. Lucy Mennes, Skyline Federation. The following state officers were elected: President, Robert W. McDonald, 17 West Cedar Street, Alexandria; first vice president, J.A. Garnett, Richmond; second vice president, Milton Perry, Alexandria; recording secretary, Marion McDonald, Alexandria; corresponding secretary, Lydia Stuples, Richmond; treasurer, Bernard Cadd, Roanoke; 2-year board member, Mrs. Lucy Mennes, Bridgewater. Robert and Marion McDonald were elected Miami delegate and alternate respectively.

A resolution was overwhelmingly adopted in support of the present administration of the Federation. The lone dissenting vote was cast by David Krause.

THE HELPLESS BLIND

From the Rockford (Illinois) Register-Republic: "'The biggest problem I have is convincing people I can do the work.' That's the statement of Sam Shifo, 2113 Bell Avenue, who, blind since the age of 6, has been doing cabinet and remodeling work for nearly 20 years. Shifo said he can impress a customer over the telephone, but often, when he enters the home to make an estimate, 'I can feel them freeze up, and I know I've lost the sale.' Shifo's home probably would dispel any doubts about his ability. He built it himself, and it features his specialty, a wood-paneled basement recreation room complete with indirect lighting, a bar, television and hi-fi. . . . Shifo uses only one special tool, a notched ruler, and his workshop contains many power tools, including saws with ugly looking blades -- without special guards. He supports his wife and five daughters."

FROM OUR READERS

"Enclosed you will find a copy of the bill captioned, 'An act preventing discrimination against prospective teachers on account of their blindness,' which was signed by the Governor this past Wednesday, April 27, after a delay of more than two months. Mr. Charles Little, legislative chairman of the ABM, and I, as author, appeared for this bill at the committee hearings. There was no open opposition. Representatives George Greene and Richard Hull, as well as others of my fellow legislators, were of great help in persuading the Governor to affix his signature. I also sought support from private citizens and organizations and their letters assisted. . . ." Gregory B. Khachadoorian, Arlington, Massachusetts.

(These are the pertinent portions of the law: "The board of education . . . shall grant certificates upon application to teachers, principals, supervisors, directors, superintendents and assistant superintendents who furnish the board with satisfactory proof that they (1) are American citizens, (2) are in good health, . . . (3) are of sound moral character, (4) possess a bachelor's degree . . . or are graduates of a normal school approved by the board, (5) meet such requirements as to courses of study . . . as may be established and put into effect by said board; no applicant shall be disqualified because of his blindness. . . . No school committee shall refuse to elect and contract with a candidate for a teaching position because of such person's blindness.")

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"Blake Ritter, of station WRCV, the Philadelphia NBC station, has recorded Hope Deferred on magnetic tape. Since this reading is

of professional quality it is planned to have additional copies made, which may be borrowed from the Library for the Blind, 17th and Spring Garden Streets, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania...." William Taylor, Jr., Media, Pennsylvania.

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"... I am so thankful for your giving me the address of Dr. Grant in Manila. Her personality is so captivating and resolute. She made an indelible impression on my mental and psychological attitudes. To meet a lady touring the world alone, and to add that her handicap was in no way less than mine, inflamed and rallied my ashamed courage and sustained my despairing love of self-reliance. This is a sufficient proof that contact with greatness inevitably brings out what is great in what is common...." Abed Rubboh Budair, Damascus, UAR.

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"... We all think that we had a really good team at the fifth sectional Workshop held in Portland in connection with the Frampton investigation. Dr. tenBroek gave us a fine briefing at our preliminary caucus. John Taylor also did a fine job both days of the Workshop. He was a veritable 'Information Bureau' on everything connected with Washington, laws, propositions, etc. Saturday we kept right on plugging for the things we wanted. John said it was the best of the five workshops he had attended...." Stanhope Pier, Portland, Oregon.

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"... The Arkansas Federation will hold its annual convention in Little Rock, on October 14-16 at the Lafayette Hotel. We welcome our fellow Federationists -- in fact, we urge that they come and help us make our convention worth while. Hotel rates will be furnished later upon request...." Ray Penix, Little Rock, Arkansas.

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"A group of blind people and their friends in the Montpelier area met at the Montpelier Inn Friday evening, April 22, and the Green Valley Council of the Blind was organized. The group was addressed by Hayden Nichols, Helen Palluotto and myself. Hayden and Helen deserve full credit for this new chapter of the Vermont Council of the Blind. They are both doing a tremendous job for us this year. I told the group of the philosophy and goals of the NFB and the VCB. They elected the following officers: president, Mrs. Hattie Hall, 52 State Street, Montpelier; vice president, Miss Ethel Martin; secretary, Mrs. Dorothy Shiner; treasurer, Miss Frances Smith; executive committee: Robert Patch and Arthur Bootman. They immediately voted to affiliate with the Vermont Council of the Blind...." Al Nichols, Bellows Falls, Vermont.

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"We have enjoyed phenomenal successes on both local and state levels recently. Some weeks ago a committee of which I am chairman met with the city manager of Columbia for the purpose of requesting land for a chapter lodge. We have been recently notified that the City

Council has voted to grant this request.

"The director of the Department of Public Welfare, Mr. Arthur B. Rivers, asked for only \$224,000 to be used for cash assistance to the blind, which was a reduction of \$5,000 from the previous year.... After appearances by our organization, the Ways and Means Committee of the House and the Senate Finance Committee voted to appropriate \$250,000, or some \$26,000 more than was asked for by Mr. Rivers. However, our honorary member, Senator John D. Long, Union, made a speech on the floor of the Senate, resulting in a unanimous vote to raise the amount to the \$265,000 which our legislative committee had requested. While the finances of this state are in the hands of a Free Conference Committee at this time, it is almost a certainty that the blind will receive \$265,000. This is \$41,000 more than asked for by our state director. Added to the increased federal money, the needy blind of this state will receive an additional \$120,000 during 1960-61 fiscal year, all because of the organized blind. We obtained a stipulation that the Department must pay out at least 95 per cent of this money during the current year...." Donald C. Capps, Columbia, South Carolina.

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"... My reason for writing at this time, is in response to Mary Walton's letter about the new book called, 'Beauty for the Sighted and the Blind.' Here's an offer. We will read the book onto tape, and make a couple of copies. Anyone who wishes to borrow the tapes may do so by writing to us. Along with the book, we will send a small 3-inch reel of tape, on which the borrower can record his reactions to the book. The comments can be copied and sent to you -- or anyone whom you designate -- to be reviewed for an issue of the Monitor. And if, at some later date, all the borrowers would like to hear who had what to say about the book, we can make a composite tape, and circulate it.... If any additional taped copies of 'Hope Deferred' are desired out here, we may be able to help.... I, too, am one of the readers who has enjoyed every bit of news from Dr. Isabel Grant. What a wonderful gal she is!" Mrs. H. J. Brudno, Tape Recording Unit, 617 Oregon Avenue, San Mateo, California.

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"I think I understand the attitude of Dr. tenBroek and the Federation generally concerning the usefulness or even the appropriateness of sheltered workshops for the blind -- that they should either be done away with or, at least, radically changed in character and purpose. With this I heartily agree. I recall only too well my own 6-month experience in one of the shops of the older type, ruled by a woman who seemed to feel that her chief mission in life was to see to it that we blind thought, spoke and acted as she decreed. More than once I heard her remind some unlucky worker that she could see and

therefore she knew best. From that type of workshop may God and man deliver us, now and for all time! Such workshops not only stick doggedly to the old, outmoded, useless patterns of work -- such as rug weaving, chair caning, broom making and mat making -- but also falsely advertise themselves to the public as places in which the blind enjoy healthful surroundings -- and even good pay! On the other hand, there may be persons (and I may be one of them) for whom sheltered work is more satisfactory than the rough-and-tumble of open competition in industrial employment. Through no fault of our own some of us were denied the decent, supposedly American opportunity of entering the competitive market when we had the normal stamina and resiliency of youth. . . ."

Patrick Morrissey, Coggon, Iowa.

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"We read the Monitor from cover to cover each month and, with one exception, enjoy it. In the column, 'From Our Readers,' there are indications of frequent deletions but you retain all the various glowing excerpts concerning your personal aptitudes and accomplishments. As consistently as this happens, the comments lose the unsolicited quality and represent an assertion of ego. Is this necessary?" Dr. Frank Palmer, Jefferson City, Missouri, (formerly Morrilton, Arkansas).

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Editor's note: A number of other letters have come in which express strong agreement with Hazel Moore on the subject of reading Braille in public -- from Sylvia Burton, Elmira, New York; Wesley Stevens, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; Dorothy Hanna, South Gate, California; Tom Lyons, Grand Rapids, Michigan, and Patrick Morrissey, Coggon, Iowa. The only dissent comes from Abraham Gulish, Bridgeton, New Jersey, who warns that a blind person traveling without a sighted companion may miss his station if he becomes too absorbed in reading, and may also inconvenience his seat-mate by obtruding his book into the latter's ribs.

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Dear Mr. Kletzing: In regard to the State Affiliate Accounting Form for reporting the receipt and expenditure of greeting card grants the following request and comments have occurred to me. I am passing them on to you for whatever worth the Subcommittee on Budget and Finance may find in them.

I find the form a pleasure to work with. It is brief, clear and yet seems to be complete; I trust that it embodies all of the purposes for which the greeting card fund is maintained.

The Colorado Federation does not seem to have any statement giving rules for the regulation of greeting card funds, and not being versed in the various legal technicalities (including postal regulations) which influence administration of such funds I would find such a statement very helpful.

The report from the Subcommittee on Budget and Finance given at Santa Fe last summer gave me a feeling that the National Federation has taken a step in the right direction. Accounting can be simple and exact, or a perpetual state of confusion depending on whether or not careful, intelligent direction has been given to the budgeting and financial administration beforehand. In my experience this 'careful' part, at least, does not lend itself conveniently to persons busy with the activities that require the expenditure and consequent accounting of funds. Thus, I feel your Committee is an absolute necessity. You are doing a fine job of translating the complexities of financing into simple terms for efficient cooperation from our state affiliates.

In closing may I again request a statement of rules and regulations in the expenditure of greeting card funds." (Mrs.) Marie Jensen, treasurer, Colorado Federation of the Blind.

HOUSE MINIMUM WAGE HEARINGS
by Floyd Matson

The NFB was represented in the person of its president, Dr. Jacobus tenBroek, at congressional hearings in mid-May on a bill (H.R. 9801) designed to increase and protect the minimum wage of blind workers in sheltered workshops.

The bill was earlier introduced by Congressman Walter S. Baring, Nevada, a long-time friend of the organized blind, who presented a strong supporting statement at the hearings conducted by the Subcommittee on Labor Standards of the House Committee on Education and Labor. Two other congressmen, Cleveland Bailey of West Virginia and George Huddleston, Jr., of Alabama, also gave testimony in support of the measure. Members of the subcommittee are: Phil M. Landrum of Georgia, chairman; James Roosevelt, California; Roman C. Pucinski, Illinois; William H. Ayres, Ohio; John H. Dent, Pennsylvania; and Edgar W. Hiestand, California.

Appearing in opposition to the bill were Irvin P. Schloss, representing the American Foundation for the Blind, and Peter J. Salmon, representing the American Association of Workers for the Blind and the General Committee of Workshops for the Blind. Although not directly represented at the hearings, the Labor Department also communicated its opposition to the committee.

In his testimony President tenBroek pointed out that the bill would increase to 40 cents per hour the minimum wage applicable to blind employees in sheltered workshops beginning January 1, 1961, and would provide for periodic increases thereafter. Noting that at least

85 of the 100 workshops for the blind throughout the country now hold certificates of exemption from the minimum-wage requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act, Dr. tenBroek asserted that the present "average wage in the workshops is 53 cents per hour -- and it is known to fall as low as 10 cents per hour."

"It is not only the scale of wages in sheltered workshops for the blind which is submarginal by any reasonable standard of decency and health," the NFB president declared. "For these workers are more than the forgotten members of our work force; they are in many respects also legally disfranchised and socially disparaged. None of them possess the privileges of collective bargaining. Many of them are without the benefits of workmen's compensation or social security, and nearly all are deprived of unemployment compensation. In short, the blind employees of sheltered workshops are generally lacking in the perquisites and amenities, the ordinary and accepted gains, of organized labor -- and are thus far unable to seek them by their own efforts. As a consequence they are literally and totally dependent -- not by virtue of their blindness but of their neglected social and economic condition -- upon the benevolence and discretion of workshop managers."

Dr. tenBroek stated that, while the present bill would not create a total solution for all these deprivations, it would directly assist in meeting the most urgent need of blind shop workers -- that for adequate minimum-wage protection. Observing that the national minimum wage of one dollar per hour is nearly twice that presently in effect in sheltered shops, he described as "modest and realistic" the bill's proposed increase of minimum shop wages to 40 cents per hour through 1961, 50 cents in the following year, and 60 cents in 1963. "In principle, of course, wages in these sheltered industries should immediately be brought to the level of the Fair Labor Standards Act," he maintained. "However, as a matter of expediency and due consideration for the readjustment involved on the part of shop managers, the moderate provisions of the present bill are recommended."

The major themes of opposition to the blind minimum-wage bill, commonly voiced by all three spokesmen against it, were first enunciated by the Labor Department in a letter to Congressman Graham Barden (chairman of the full committee) from Acting Secretary of Labor James T. O'Connell. The criticisms were (1) that blind sheltered workers receiving less than the minimum wage are generally incapable of earning more, and (2) that the Baring bill would impose a rigid and mandatory wage standard assertedly less effective and desirable than the present "flexible approach in which each case is decided on its individual merits."

The Labor Department communication further maintained that

remunerative employment is not the sole function or value of sheltered workshop activity: "Undoubtedly [these workers] derive benefits from such employment, not only of an economic nature, but of a social and personal nature as well." The letter did not specify, however, what social or personal benefits might be said to accrue to blind workers employed at wages and under conditions undeniably below accepted minimum standards of dignity, health and self-respect.

The first of the two main counter-arguments -- i.e., that blind sheltered workers now earning submarginal wages are generally incapable of more remunerative employment -- raises, apart from the doubtful validity of its assumption, the question whether any individuals so precariously occupied and pitifully underpaid are in any meaningful sense to be regarded as "gainfully employed." At the least, this argument constitutes a convincing claim for their eligibility to receive disability benefits while engaged in such unrewarding labors. More basically, it forces the question: if these unfortunate workers are not undergoing rehabilitation training, and if they are not occupied in substantial gainful employment, what in fact are they doing in the sheltered workshops? Or, more exactly, what are the workshops doing with them?

The second of the opposition arguments -- that the mandatory requirements of the bill, however modest, are less desirable than the present "flexible" and unregulated policy -- reflects the evident purpose of the bill's opponents to retain arbitrary and discretionary authority in the hands of administrators. It is significant that both of the private agency spokesmen testifying at the hearings strongly urged the delegation of further broad powers to the existing "Administrator's Advisory Committee on Sheltered Workshops" under the Labor Department. This committee, on which organizations of the blind and handicapped are conspicuously unrepresented, is presently composed of 14 persons, of whom no less than ten are drawn from agency or managerial groups -- most notably those groups engaged in the operation of sheltered workshops. (Among the latter are the Pennsylvania Branch Shut-in Society, the Goodwill Industries, the Volunteers of America, the National Conference of Catholic Charities, and the Brooklyn Industrial Home for the Blind.) In view of this striking managerial preponderance, the preference of the advisory committee for a completely "flexible" approach and broad discretionary power over wages and working conditions in the sheltered shops is easily understood.

Those familiar with the history of labor legislation will be impressed by the close similarity of these agency-managerial demands for flexibility and discretion with the outcry of employer interests a generation ago against the minimum-wage legislation and similar protective measures instituted under the New Deal. There is the same argument for the varying productivity of individual workers; the same

resistance to the supposed "rigidity" of legislation affecting all employees alike within an overall class; the same desire, most of all, for the absolute freedom of administrators and managers to set wage scales as they choose and to lower them at will.

The five thousand or more blind men and women who work in sheltered shops have reason, however, to expect that their representation before Congress, together with their representation within it, will finally outweigh their total lack of representation within the administrative departments of the government charged directly with the responsibility for their welfare and conditions of livelihood.

HERE AND THERE

From the Ziegler Magazine: "... Miss Polly Thompson, who for a great many years has been companion to Helen Keller, died in a hospital in Connecticut on March 21, after a long illness. Miss Thompson and Miss Keller have been inseparable since Mrs. Anne Sullivan Macy died many years ago.

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From The Eye Catcher (New York; Mary Jane Hills, Editor): "... It is gratifying to learn that, as a representative of the Joint Legislative Committee of the Greater Council of New York Agencies for the Blind and the New York State Federation of Workers for the Blind, Mr. Peter Salmon has written to Governor Rockefeller asking him to sign the education bill [to eliminate discrimination against blind teachers] when and if it reaches his desk. It has been a piece of legislation heretofore pushed solely by the ESAB.... The New York Federation of Labor has endorsed our legislation and has sent letters to the proper parties so stating. Orchids to Norma Wagner and Bill Dwyer for their cooperative efforts in obtaining this support for us. ... Some time this month Ray and Thelma Dinsmore will be returning to their home state -- to Indianapolis, to be exact. Ray is going into business with a friend, selling, tuning and renovating pianos. What was my reaction to this news? I felt as if someone cut off my right arm at the elbow. Ray's inherent modesty sometimes contributed to our forgetting it, but he has been our legislative expert, our peace-maker, and our most active down-state leader.... At a recent meeting of the Tri-Boro chapter (Manhattan, the Bronx, Queens), Henry A. Sloan, 157 E. 18th St., New York City, was elected president. Since this chapter has been suffering from serious membership difficulties, if any readers have friends or acquaintances in these three boroughs, drop them a line and try to interest them in joining.... Congratulations to Bill Dwyer and his co-workers in the Tri-City Council (Albany,

Schenectady, Troy). They now have the largest paid-up membership in the history of that chapter...."

From the Florida White Cane: "... The FFB Board of Directors met on April 3 in Tampa, and its first act was to admit a new chapter from Miami Beach.... Dr. Eber Palmer, head of the School for the Blind, Batavia, New York, attended the March 10th meeting of the Sarasota Chapter and addressed the group. His 1960 graduating class is coming to Sarasota during Easter vacation and will stay at the Foundation. Another guest, George 'Specs' Torporcer, one of baseball's great men, also spoke. George lost his sight in 1951 but, undaunted, carried on, giving lectures in high schools, clubs, etc. and writing articles for magazines.... Carl Wiley, instructor of telephone switchboard operation, started a new class on March 23 in the school room of the Houck Foundation.... The Tampa chapter recently welcomed a new member, William Lee, who is 91 years young.... Blind persons everywhere who are 55 or over may be interested in joining the American Association of Retired Persons. The chief benefit is that prescribed drugs may then be purchased at a 25 per cent discount. Annual dues are \$2.00 and membership applications should be sent to 137 Central Avenue, St. Petersburg, Florida.... The Tampa chapter now has more than \$6,000 in its fund for the building of a home for the blind...."

Congressman J. Edward Roush (Indiana) has begun sending his Newsletter in Braille to blind voters in his district.

It is with the deepest regret that Federationists learn from Newton Ottone, president of the Springfield, Massachusetts, chapter, that on orders from his physician he is being compelled to withdraw from all outside activities. He was the founder and guiding spirit of his chapter and extremely active in the state organization. For a number of years he has been one of the most dynamic and resourceful White Cane Week chairmen in the whole country. He has been a delegate to many national conventions. His inspiring leadership will be sorely missed. Dr. ten-Broek wrote to him: "The loss of your active participation is a severe blow to our movement. I have often marveled at the extent and vigor of your activity in Springfield and Massachusetts generally and the amount you have been able to accomplish over the years both in public relations and in building programs. Accept my commendation and gratitude, speaking for myself personally and for the organized blind movement, for your long years of ardent service and your important and valuable contribution to the cause. I shall, of course, expect to hear from you from time to time as a rank and file member with ideas, comments and opinions. Meanwhile, the best of luck to you."

Another error was made in the Monitor report of 1959 White Week receipts. The Louisiana Federation of the Blind was credited

with \$250 -- the figure should have been \$500.

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Under the heading "Too Many Agencies Serve Blind Here," a Philadelphia newspaper reported -- "The number of agencies serving the blind in Philadelphia, Delaware and Montgomery Counties is excessive, and yet they do not meet enough specialized needs." Among the areas in which the 28 agencies were said not to provide adequate help were travel training, job training and placement, eye, hearing and general medical examinations. The Health and Welfare Council advised that "no new agency for the blind be established in the area."

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From Visually Handicapped Views (South Dakota): "At 4 P. M. April 11, Governor Ralph Herseth turned the first spade of earth and thereby started construction of the new School for the Blind in Aberdeen."

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From the San Francisco Chronicle: "Attorney Vincent Hallinan returned to the courtrooms yesterday after a 3-year suspension of his license for evasion of taxes, and lost his first case -- defending a blind beggar. The veteran trial lawyer pulled out all the stops in his defense of Robert F. Greenawalt, 39. While the blind man squeezed his accordion to demonstrate his skill, Hallinan pleaded: 'This man is not a beggar. He's a wandering troubador who gives entertainment to people and asks nothing in return.' Hallinan suggested to the jury that street singing is an honorable profession and added: 'That's the way Al Jolson and Eddie Cantor got their starts. . . .' At one point Hallinan compared Greenawalt to the juggler of Notre Dame. 'You remember,' he said, 'how the statue of the Virgin Mary came to life and stepped down to gently wipe his brow.' Deputy District Attorney Frank Shaw saw the case differently, however, and in the end the jury found Greenawalt guilty of begging as charged. . . ."

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From Tell Me About Japan (published by Japan Travel Bureau): "The profession of rubbing the skin and kneading the muscles belongs generally to the blind. White staff in hand, he gropes his way along the streets, drawing the attention of clients by the melancholy sound of his whistle."

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From the California Council Bulletin (April): "By the time you read this, the Council will have its own credit union. Membership is open to Council members, their families, and the affiliated organizations that compose the Council. The organizational meeting of our credit union was held on February 13 in Los Angeles. The board elected the following: President, 'Blackie' Blackburn; vice president, Tony Mannino, and secretary-treasurer, George Bancroft. . . . The executive committee also selected a supervisory committee -- the watchdog of our credit union -- composed of Onvia Ticer, Howard Porter and Jerry Drake. . . . During a recent visit to California, Dick

Kinney, deaf blind assistant director of the Hadley Correspondence School, said, 'I have never been aware of struggling against the odds imposed upon me; I have learned to do one thing at a time.' He has invented some ingenious devices. In his apartment, where he lives alone, a specially equipped telephone enables him to 'hear' by feeling vibrations transmitted in Morse code. His doorbell is connected to a system of oscillating fans, one in each room. When a visitor rings, Dick feels a slight breeze. . . . The San Diego Braille Club celebrated its 38th birthday on February 19. . . . Jack Gladden, president of the San Bernardino County Club, recently received the following letter: 'The San Bernardino County Welfare Department would like to invite your organization to send a committee of not more than three persons to meet on a regular basis with the supervisor of our Blind Services Division and one other worker. The purpose of these meetings would be to discuss general problems of mutual interest in order to promote maximum understanding and cooperation between the blind in our county and the agency administering the blind aid programs. . . . On our part we would be particularly interested in discussing the development of job opportunities for the blind locally.' Roscoe Lyda, Director."

From The New Yorker: "The second volume of the autobiography of Karl Bjarnhof, blind, 62-year-old Danish cellist, journalist, short-story writer, and novelist, has now been published by Knopf. He calls it 'The Good Light.' Together with its companion volume, 'The Stars Grow Pale,' it forms an indelibly affecting piece of work. . . . It would be excusable for Mr. Bjarnhof to be either sentimental or bitter about his experience, but there is not a sliver of either attitude in his books. . . ."

The imposition of a requirement for 20/20 visual acuity as a condition of eligibility for enrollment of trainees in the new graduate course in mobility training, starting this month at Boston College, will undoubtedly give rise to a considerable amount of discussion and controversy. Such a policy was originally recommended by a so-called "National Conference on Mobility and Orientation," held some months ago. With reference to this recommendation, Bill Laack, of St. Paul, Minnesota, wrote to the editor of the New Outlook for the Blind, in part: "In this enlightened age when we are doing away with the deification of physical sight, I was tremendously amazed to read the article about the findings of the national conference on mobility training. 'Mobility training is a task for a sighted, rather than a blind, individual.' This is an extreme, if not a ridiculously absurd conclusion. If this policy of excluding qualified, competent blind individuals from teaching orientation were adopted, it would be a shockingly regressive downward step. . . . There is a crying need for intelligent, competent mobility instructors. To deprive the field of mobility training of the talents of qualified people as a matter of principle, would be worse than nefarious. Let us all fold

our hands and say a silent prayer that such turn-the-clock-back exclusion never happens." (But apparently it has.)

On April 27 the Interim Committee of the Iowa legislature appropriated \$200,000 for the remodeling of the building in Des Moines which is to be used as an orientation and adjustment center for the blind and as headquarters for the Iowa Commission for the Blind.

Last month's Monitor contained a letter from Mary Walton expressing the hope that she would soon be able to read a review of "Beauty for the Sighted and the Blind", by Allen H. Eaton. Professor William L. Dauterman of Texas Tech, Lubbock, Texas, has obliged with an excellent report in the May New Outlook. The reviewer, who is himself blind, was formerly supervisor of the Kansas Rehabilitation Center for the Adult Blind in Topeka.

The Board of Home Teacher Certification of the AAWB has now detailed the qualifications to be met by an individual for certification by the AAWB as a home teacher. One of these is two years of college credits or, in lieu thereof, four years' successful employment experience as a home teacher. A New Outlook editorial is caustically critical of this "low standard." The editorial writer insists that a college degree should be a minimum requirement. He does not explain how people with college degrees are to be persuaded to become home teachers at the miserably inadequate pay scale, in many areas only \$3,000 to \$3,600 a year -- and even less. Paul Kirton reports that in Missouri, where a college degree is required, a recent applicant was offered the magnificent starting salary of \$2,760 a year. Some of the greatest home teachers I have ever known have been without college degrees and, in all likelihood, quite innocent of any knowledge of differential calculus. In recent years my own state has refused to consider the applications of persons who are eminently qualified by reason of practical knowledge, all-around ability and the possession of a wide variety of skills, and who are imbued with enthusiasm, zeal and devotion, but who lack that all-important bit of inscribed parchment. I have also encountered a few home teachers with college degrees who did little more than go through the motions.

The following senators have co-sponsored S-3449, similar to H. R. 1923 (the King bill): R. Vance Hartke, Indiana; Ernest Gruening, Alaska; Oren Long, Hawaii; Paul H. Douglas, Illinois; Margaret C. Smith, Maine; Hubert H. Humphrey, Minnesota; Stuart Symington, Missouri; Mike Mansfield and James E. Murray, Montana; Harrison A. Williams, Jr., New Jersey; Wayne Morse, Oregon; Joseph S. Clark, Pennsylvania; Theodore Green, Rhode Island; Frank E. Moss, Utah; Robert Byrd and Jennings Randolph, West Virginia; Henry M. Jackson, Washington.

On April 24 death came as a release from a long and painful illness to Mrs. John Steele, wife of the president of the new Henderson, Kentucky, chapter.

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The Nevada News Bulletin reports that, because of a car breakdown, the Law Vegas members of the Board did not reach Reno until 11 P. M., March 25, but they proceeded to rout out the Reno members and the meeting got under way at 12:30 A. M. It lasted until 5 A. M.

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It is reported that there are openings in Kentucky for one rehabilitation counselor and two home teachers. Write to Mr. T. V. Cranmer, Supervisor, Services for the Blind, Department of Education, Bureau of Rehabilitation Service, Frankfort, Kentucky. As a result of recent legislation, Kentucky will have, for the first time, home teachers paid by the state. A bill permitting a blind voter to select anyone of his choice to help him in voting has also become law.

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Those who were reading the Braille Monitor in 1956 and 1957 will remember the case of Nyal McConoughey, who lost his sight while a civilian employee of the Air Force in Japan. After a period of rehabilitation in the United States, he finally obtained re-assignment to a responsible position in Japan, over the strenuous opposition of the tradition bound bureaucrats. The NFB took a very active part in securing his re-assignment. He was the first blind civilian to be employed at a base overseas -- this fact alone is noteworthy. On January 25 of this year the President's Committee on the Employment of the Physically Handicapped received a glowing report of Mr. McConoughey's excellent work. The Chief, Civilian Personnel Division, wrote: "He has continually maintained peak efficiency and has been instrumental in effecting numerous distinct improvements in the billeting function. . . . He has devoted many hours of his off-duty time to insure the efficient operation of his department but he has still found time to contact and personally visit the leaders of the program for the welfare and rehabilitation of the Japanese blind. His advice, suggestions and personal demonstrations have proved an inspiration to those engaged in Japanese Blind Welfare."

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From The International Journal for the Education of the Blind: "There are now some 1150 blind students in American colleges and universities. Of these, Recordings for the Blind is supplying textbooks, recorded on the little plastic discs, to about 600. In addition to its headquarters at 121 East 58th Street, New York 23, New York, it now has 14 branches and has produced 4,500 titles since 1951. . . . A million-dollar addition to the Missouri School for the Blind, comprising modern dormitories and classrooms, has been completed and during a recent state convention of teachers some 500 of those in attendance were guests of the School on an inspection tour featuring the new facilities. . . . The American Association of Instructors for the Blind is holding its biennial

convention this year at the Tennessee School for the Blind in Donelson (a suburb of Nashville), June 26-30. A number of NFB Miami-bound delegates are planning to stop off at Donelson and attend at least the first 3 days of this important and always interesting conclave. [The NFB has been invited to present a speaker on the AAIB program. He will be Mr. Kenneth Jernigan, our first vice president.]... According to the Brooklyn Industrial Home for the Blind figures, there are now 5 times as many blind children in its area between the ages of 6 and 13 as there are between 0 and 6, indicating that the retrolental fibroplasia peak is now in the first and second grades and that new enrollments of blind children will decline during the next few years... Students attending the Maryland School for the Blind are taking bricklaying and automotive vocational work in a downtown Baltimore high school... The Louisiana School for the Blind has joined the growing number of those having organized guidance counseling for students. It is being emphasized, however, that this is a 'multi-phasic' program, to be participated in by parents and staff, as well as by the new professional counselor, who is Mr. Maefield Kiper."

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India -- Plans are well under way for the establishment of the first rural training center for the blind in this great subcontinent. The site chosen is on the seashore. It has 200 acres, with pens and sheds for animals, a large truck garden, 1,000 cocoanut, 300 mango and numerous custard apple trees. The project aims at teaching the blind trainees practical agriculture, horticulture, vegetable raising, poultry growing, animal husbandry, sheep and pig rearing and a number of simple rural crafts and trades, such as basketry, net making, weaving, pottery and the manufacturing of brushes and tiles.

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The Weekly News reports the invention of an electronic device which will enable a blind bowler to ascertain without sighted help which pins are left standing after his first roll. Tiny magnets are inserted into the base of standard pins and when one of them topples an under-the-alley switch is opened. A box within handy reach of the bowler contains a set of miniature pins in regular formation. If his first ball knocks down all but the 4 and 7 pins, the corresponding pins will remain standing in the box and he can get the picture by feeling them.

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It has now been announced that the 1960 convention of the Western Conference of Teachers of the Adult Blind will be held at Hotel Ben Lomond, Ogden, Utah, July 27-29. The Southern Pacific Railway serves Ogden from the west and the Union Pacific from the east, north and south.

IMPORTANT DECISIONS ON SHELTERED WORKSHOPS
AND DISABILITY BENEFITS
by Jacobus tenBroek

What is the meaning of "substantial gainful activity"? When does one have the ability to engage in it? When is engaging in it "substantial"? When is it "gainful"? And what sort of activity must it be?

New light has been shed on these questions -- which are of far-reaching importance to blind people -- by recent court decisions and a congressional committee report. In particular, these findings directly affect the thousands of blind men and women employed in sheltered workshops.

The House Subcommittee on the Administration of the Social Security Laws, in its preliminary report last March (see the Braille Monitor, May 1960), expressed the opinion that "it should be a rare case in which a severely impaired individual who can market his skills only in a sheltered workshop and is capable of productivity resulting in very low earnings would be found able to engage in 'substantial gainful activity.' "

Still more notable was a recent ruling handed down by Judge Kaufman of the southern district of New York that, in effect, "substantial gainful activity" varies with the ability and experience of the disabled individual. "Even assuming that plaintiff was physically capable of engaging in clerical work," he wrote, "it does not necessarily follow that he was able 'to engage in any substantial gainful activity.' " Implicit in this criterion is that the gainful work be commensurate with the plaintiff's educational attainments, his training and experience."

Most significant of all from the standpoint of the blind is the recent opinion of a Pennsylvania district judge that a blind ex-steelworker employed in a sheltered workshop is not engaging in "substantial gainful activity," and therefore is eligible for disability insurance benefits under the Social Security program. The judge's ruling was based not on the amount of wages earned but on the nature of the "activity" in which the blind sheltered shop worker was engaged. In this respect it paralleled an earlier referee's decision in the same case that "substantial gainful activity" properly means competitive employment and therefore does not embrace the activities of sheltered workshops.

The Pennsylvania case revolved around the disability claim of George W. Pulliam, a steelworker of 20 years' experience who became totally blind in 1952. Since then he has been employed in a Mercer County, Pennsylvania, sheltered shop at an income of \$20 per week (now \$23.75), or an average wage of 60 cents per hour. By comparison with the current

average for steelworkers of \$2.30 per hour, Pulliam has been earning approximately 25 per cent of the wages that would have been his except for the accident of blindness.

The Social Security Administration first denied Pulliam's claim for disability benefits, but, upon his appeal, a hearings referee reversed this decision and granted benefits. The referee's finding is worth quoting in some detail: " 'Ability to engage' implies an ability to compete in the labor market. The claimant has been employed since October 1952 as a rug weaver. Sheltered work does not constitute competitive employment. Such work is made available to the individual because he is unable to compete in the labor market. Sheltered employment enables the person granted such employment to maintain his morale and self-respect. Philanthropic reasons probably played a great part in making work for both the claimant and others similarly situated. The Mercer County Branch of the Pennsylvania Association for the Blind is definitely a sheltered workshop. "

He concluded: "The referee finds that the claimant's condition was such that he was unable to engage in any substantial gainful activity since May 31, 1952, and that the work which he performed since October 1952, was performed under special conditions in sheltered employment under the auspices of an organization which is a member of the United Fund Agency. It is, therefore, the decision of the referee that the claimant is entitled to disability insurance benefits for which he has applied."

Following this action the Appeals Council of the Social Security Administration, on its own motion, undertook a review of the referee's decision which culminated in a reversal of the decision and another denial of Pulliam's claim for disability benefits. At this point the United Steelworkers of America initiated a civil action against Arthur S. Flemming (as Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare), which led to the opinion upholding Pulliam's claim by Judge Herbert P. Sogge of the western district of Pennsylvania (decided February 8, 1960). The final paragraphs of his ruling follow:

"It is true that the facts found by both the referee and the Appeals Council, which are also adopted by this Court, reveal that the plaintiff receives an income of \$23.75 per week and that he does weave rugs, but they do not establish that the activity in which he engages is in itself substantially gainful. On the contrary, it appears that his income is not wages for work performed, but is derived from purely philanthropic sources. Neither does the evidence disclose any particular extent to which the plaintiff engages in physical activity, nor does it indicate the amount of work he performs.

"Without reaching the question as to whether or not the sum of \$23.75, even as wages earned, would suggest a substantial gainful activity, this Court is of the opinion that the facts presented in this case do not support an inference or conclusion that the plaintiff is able to engage in a substantial gainful activity within the terms of Section 223 of the Social Security Act."

CALIFORNIA DEMOCRATS ENDORSE
"RIGHT TO ORGANIZE" LEGISLATION

From the California Council Bulletin: "At its convention, held this year in Fresno in February, the California Democratic Council threw its weight behind state legislation affirming the right of the blind to organize and to be consulted. Most of the credit for this powerful ally must go to Jerry Drake of Lawndale. Jerry lined up support for the resolution in 6 to 8 Democratic Clubs in three Assembly Districts, and in the 17th Congressional District Democratic Council. With such well-laid groundwork, support of the 4,000 delegates and alternates was virtually assured. . . . The Convention adopted a slightly condensed version of the following resolution:

" 'WHEREAS, some state officials have at times interfered with the rights of blind people to organize by joining organizations of their own choosing and have refused to consult with representatives of organizations of the blind concerning programs affecting the blind; and

" 'WHEREAS, the California Council of the Blind, an organization composed of blind people, is sponsoring state legislation that would guarantee the rights of blind people to organize and to be consulted concerning programs affecting the blind; and

" 'WHEREAS, organized labor has had similar guarantees for more than a quarter of a century; now, therefore be it

" 'RESOLVED by the California Democratic Council that it endorses state legislation that would guarantee the right of blind people to organize free from governmental interference and that would provide for consultation between those administering programs for the blind and representatives of organizations of the blind. '"

TESTIMONY OF KENNETH JERNIGAN, DIRECTOR,
IOWA COMMISSION FOR THE BLIND, BEFORE THE SUBCOMMITTEE
ON SPECIAL EDUCATION OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE
ON EDUCATION AND LABOR, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS, MAY 13, 1960

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

... As an administrator of public programs for the blind I know how vitally important to this group of the disabled are the rights of free organization and consultation; and I know also their immense value to those who administer services to the blind. The considerable progress which the Iowa Commission has made during the past two years in the improvement and expansion of its programs has been due, in important measure, to the close and continuous cooperation which has existed between the Commission and the organized blind of Iowa. The value to the Commission of regular consultation, formal and informal, with an independent and representative association of blind people cannot be overestimated both in the initial formulation of programs and in their continuing execution. For the blind, at the same time, the right to form their own organizations, the right to speak for themselves, and the right to be heard in consultation with the agencies of government on matters affecting them are no less crucial than they are for other Americans.

When I came to Iowa in April of 1958 to assume the duties of Director of the State Commission for the Blind, I found a very limited and ineffective program of rehabilitation for the blind. Its very existence was scarcely known to state officials and the public at large. There was no consultation between the agency and the organization of the blind -- no attempt to learn from the representatives of the blind themselves how the program of rehabilitation was actually functioning from the point of view of the client. In fact, the very opposite was true. There was a wide-spread belief among the blind that if one wanted help from the Commission, he would do well to avoid the organized blind movement and certainly to avoid active membership in it. The Commission was, of course, in a position, if it chose to do so, to exercise considerable control and influence over those who depended upon its services. The agency could help an individual go into business or to college, or it could refuse such help. The reason for the refusal might be perfectly valid, or it might be a punishment for noncompliance. How could one prove which? The individual client had virtually no recourse or remedy, since the Commission was not required to give any recognition whatever to the blind as an organized group, but could deal with them singly and separately.

For the past two years the Commission and the state Association of the Blind have worked closely together to develop a program.

There is systematic and regular consultation. Jointly the agency and the organized blind have gone to the Legislature and the public with their problems and needs. The results have demonstrated the validity of the approach. This year more than four times as many blind persons will be rehabilitated into competitive employment as were rehabilitated in 1957. Also, there is scarcely a member of the public at large in our state who is unaware of the existence of the program.

Iowa is not unique in its experience. In many areas of the country the agencies doing work for the blind do not recognize or regularly consult with the representatives of the organized blind movement. This is not a healthy situation.

Stated in positive terms, an agency doing work for the blind will strengthen its program and increase its effectiveness if it seeks the advice and views of those it is established to serve. The blind have not had full and free access to the agencies of government concerned with their welfare; and, unfortunately, the constitutional guarantee of the rights of free speech, of assembly, and of petition have not been sufficient for their effectuation in practice. The efforts of blind people to organize voluntarily on the local, state, and national levels, have frequently been interfered with by public officials whose interest has appeared to be in the perpetuation of a custodian-ward relationship. A remedy for this deplorable situation is provided by bills presently before Congress (H. R. 14 and S. 1093) designed expressly "to protect the right of the blind to self-expression through organizations of the blind." I hope that the Committee will lend its support to this urgently needed and fully democratic legislation.

Let me turn now to another broad area of consideration. The new concepts which are evolving in the general field of public welfare are of vital significance to the rehabilitation programs for the blind. As the administrator of one such program I should like to say a few words about certain bills now before Congress. It is scarcely too much to say that a revolution has taken place over recent years in our concept of the nature and purpose of public welfare in general. Today, the objective of governmental aid to the disadvantaged and disabled is not relief alone but active rehabilitation -- vocational, social, and personal. Nowhere is this revolution more evident than in the categorical aid programs of social security, which since 1956 have incorporated the goals of self-support and self-care. In doing so they have registered the recognition of our society that the human need of the handicapped person to achieve independence and self-sufficiency is no less important than his animal need for food and shelter.

However, between the acceptance in theory of these constructive goals and their practical realization there are still formidable obstacles

which need to be removed from the law and its administration. In particular, in the case of blind recipients of public assistance, the achievement of the program goals requires first of all that aid be granted on the basis of equal minimum payments, so as to reduce the severe effects of the individual means test. For grants above the minimum amount the special needs of individual blind recipients would still be taken into consideration; but the virtue of the proposal of equal minimum payments is that the privacy, personal dignity, and simple integrity of the recipient of aid would be fortified and affirmed. By this method the primary consideration becomes the demonstrated need of the entire group of blind recipients, rather than that of each individual taken separately. For those who know the inordinately detailed and painfully personal character of the investigations presently conducted under the authority of "individual need individually determined," it is difficult to exaggerate the value of a provision which treats the blind client as a member of a class entitled to be dealt with equally in a manner prescribed by law.

As a further step forward in this connection I believe that the Social Security Act should be amended to allow blind recipients of public assistance to retain more realistic amounts of property and resources than are presently allowed, both as means of encouraging individual plans for self-support and as a stimulus to self-confidence in overcoming the numerous barriers against economic and social integration. To permit these blind persons to enjoy modest amounts of property without penalty -- particularly where such property is an investment in future self-sufficiency -- is simply to preserve an essential basis for full personal and vocational rehabilitation. Such a provision is presently embodied in H. R. 1923, now before Congress, which provides that the first \$1,000 of net earned income be exempt in any yearly period, plus one-half of all earned income in excess of \$1,000 until complete self-support has been attained. The bill also (in my opinion, wisely) proposes that at least \$3,000 assessed valuation of real and/or personal property be disregarded in determining eligibility for aid or the amount of aid to be granted. Besides this, all property and income which is devoted to carrying out a plan for self-support would be disregarded.

Another improvement which, in the minds of many welfare authorities, is long overdue in public assistance is the complete abolition of the requirement of relatives' responsibility as a condition of eligibility. It is significant that, in 1956, Congress added the following declaration to the Social Security Act: "To promote the well-being of the Nation by encouraging the states to place greater emphasis on helping to strengthen family life and helping needy families and individuals attain the maximum economic and personal independence of which they are capable." In stark contrast to this objective of strengthening family

life, the consequence of enforcing relatives' responsibility has been to weaken family life and disrupt relations among relatives. Even in financial terms the effects of this provision have been insignificant in reducing expenditures under Aid to the Blind; but far more important is the hardship which the provision works both upon aging parents passing out of the productive years of life and upon their blind sons and daughters still within those years. In short, the result of the enforcement of relatives' responsibility has been to spread rather than to relieve poverty, while it contributes to the strain and breakdown of those family relations which it is a purpose of the program to strengthen.

There is a further anachronism in the present federal-state programs of public assistance which needs to be removed if the affirmative purposes of these programs are to be achieved. I refer to the residence requirements which all but a few states still impose as a condition of eligibility for aid (and in many instances for vocational rehabilitation as well). Such requirements are not only archaic and outmoded; they are plainly in violation of the right of free movement by the individual in search of opportunity and personal advancement -- a right which is fundamental both to our economic system and to our moral and political commitment to personal liberty. Blind men and women have, of course, the same motives as other people in their movements from state to state or from one community to another; either they travel for reasons of health or in quest of new and better opportunities. Of immediate pertinence, moreover, is the fact that the barriers of residence erected by the states are markedly inconsistent with the high degree of national interest in the public assistance programs and incompatible with the announced purposes of self-support and self-care. I am fully in agreement with the large and increasing numbers of welfare administrators and workers -- among them the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare and the National Advisory Council on Public Assistance -- who believe that no needy individual should be prevented from obtaining essential aid merely because he is caught in the technicalities of residence laws. For all these reasons I hope this Committee and the Congress will give serious consideration to H. R. 30, a bill which calls for the abolition of residence requirements by the states as a condition of federal participation in their public assistance programs for the blind.

I doubt that anyone will quarrel in principle with the proposition that blindness is, at any rate, a disability against which all Americans should be insured. At the present time, however, only those sightless Americans of age 50 or over are eligible for the benefits of the disability insurance program under the Old Age and Survivors Insurance provisions of social security. This age limit should, I submit, be eliminated as arbitrary and unrealistic. More than that, the age restriction upon eligibility is incompatible with the basic goals of self-

support and rehabilitation which I have referred to as characteristic of our modern welfare philosophy. For it is precisely those young blind men and women whose productive careers lie before them who are now deprived of the benefits of disability insurance. This is the time of life when the financial security afforded by disability insurance can be of most assistance in paving the way for a full return to normal activity and livelihood. To refuse disability benefits to those below the age of 50 is to deny help to those who need it most and can make the most effective use of it.

As additional needed improvements in the disability program I hope that Congress will affirm that, once eligibility has been secured, the blind person will be entitled to receive full benefits for the duration of his disability; that eligibility may not be conditioned upon mandatory submission to vocational rehabilitation (a program whose own constructive values are seriously jeopardized as soon as its completely voluntary character is compromised); and that any blind person employed in a covered industry who has at least one quarter of coverage will be entitled to receive disability benefits -- in place of the present requirement of a full 20 quarters of covered employment as a condition of eligibility. It is hard to see any justification, either practical or moral, for the 20 quarter requirement -- which fails utterly to comprehend the severe consequences that follow when a younger head of a household becomes blind and is unable to support his family. Three bills presently before Congress -- S. 3067, H.R. 8218, and H.R. 8219 -- contain all of the provisions I have discussed; and I therefore respectfully recommend their favorable consideration. . . .



